



7 April 2009

Korea Tour Length Changes and Incentives

1. On March 2, 2009, the Department of Defense approved changes to the Joint Federal Travel Regulation (JFTR) that affect the length of military tours in Korea. The revised JFTR now allows both 36-month and 24-month accompanied tours at Pyeongtaek, Osan, Daegu, Chinhae and Seoul. Two additional locations, Dongducheon and Uijeongbu (Area I), now offer 24-month accompanied tours.
2. Enhancing the quality of life in Korea is one of my highest priorities. I strongly encourage commanders to offer command sponsorship and 3 year tours, wherever possible, to Service Members currently serving in Korea on unaccompanied tours and to those whose families may already be here but not command sponsored. This is a great opportunity to stabilize families and provide a better, more predictable family life for Service Members. A tour in Korea provides world class training, superior schooling for children, opportunities for advanced college education, and unique possibilities to explore a country rich in history and tradition. I encourage everyone to take advantage of the unique travel opportunities and abundant cultural resources offered by our host country.
3. Because we want to ensure a high quality of life for all our families, this offer is not unlimited. We will not accept more families than we can accommodate in our schools and healthcare facilities. Our total number of families in Korea will grow over time, but our immediate goal is to have 4,320 military families in Korea by the end of FY2010.
4. Command sponsorship comes with many benefits and incentives. The Army and Air Force offer Assignment Incentive Pay (AIP) of \$300 per month for Service Members who accept a 36-month tour (or a 24-month tour in Dongducheon or Uijeongbu as long as family members reside in Area I). With command sponsorship, family members become eligible for government housing (or off post/base housing), COLA and OHA at the "with dependents" rate, Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DoDDS) (on post or through tuition reimbursed approved local schools), Child Development Care services (where available) and TRICARE Prime.
5. I want all personnel to be fully informed about decisions affecting their families. Commanders will ensure that Service Members who desire to serve an accompanied tour in Area I complete an "Acknowledgment of Command-Sponsored Benefit Limitations for Personnel Assigned to Area I" memorandum from USFK Policy Letter #26 and include this acknowledgement in their command sponsorship request. This requirement ensures Service Members are aware of the fact that certain benefits normally associated with command sponsorship are limited or unavailable in Area I (i.e., government housing, DoDD Schools, etc).
6. Point of contact for this message is the USFK, J1 Personnel Policy and Programs Branch, DSN 723-5632, usfkj1mod@korea.army.mil.

We Go Together!

WALTER L. SHARP
General, US Army
Commander

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